/The Tibetans/

*563 [197] race, the Hsi-fans of the country west of T'ao-chao speak the Tibetan language and are as much Tibetans as the inhabitants of any other portion of the Tibetan plateau. They come into contact [177] with the Koko Nor Mongols farther north, whom they bully and plunder. Unlike the Mongols, who are being pushed back every- [648] where along the northern borders of China by Chinese agriculturalists, the Tibetans of the Kansu border hold their own [181] against the Chinese colonists. The northeastern Tibetans are truculent and independent as compared to the Mongols, and they take readily and successfully to farming.

[142] There appear to be two physical types in Tibet, the short, round-faced Mongoloid type, and the tall Aryan type with prominent features. The latter type is common among the Tibetans of [291] Amdo. The eastern Tibetan, even though he is in Chinese dress, [099] may be readily recognized by his peculiar habit of standing with [516] his feet turned out at right angles to his body.

On the whole, these people are hardy, independent, and cau- [181] tious with strangers, but they are also notably hospitable.

2. Patterns of living

*563 342 a. Dwelling

Like all nomads, the Tibetans have no fixed homes. They live in rectangular tents usually made of yak hair instead of felt, with wooden framework. The bottoms of the tents are made fast with iron pins or animal horns. Mud, stone or dry dung is built up around the tent to keep off wind and snow.

*563 342 352 353 The interior arrangement varies little from tent to tent. A mud stove is in the middle, a Buddha image at the left side. On wooden shelves along the walls are chests and boxes where food and clothing are stored. Skin bags of butter, tsamba or flour, and saddles and rifles also hang along the walls. Shelves on the right side hold pans, water buckets, kettles, bowls, cups, a stone mill and a few skin bags. Near the door there is usually a [237] heap of dried ox dung for fuel.

[372] b. Food

*563 262 [241] [489] Farm products do not grow in the cold climate and high altitude, and transportation is difficult. Thus there is little variety in foodstuffs, and eating and drinking are simple functions. The daily fare is beef, mutton and other domestic meats, fresh and sour milk, butter, cheese, noodles, tsamba (parched barley meal) and tea.

*563 264 There are no regular meal times in most households. In winter when the days are short, they may eat three meals a day; in spring and summer, perhaps four or five. During the day they [262] eat tsamba and sour milk. The evening meal is noodles with boiled beef or mutton, though the poor can have noodles and beef less often.

Rich and poor eat with their hands, though the Tu-kung (chief

132 variable, thus making agriculture hazardous. The growing sea-
[241] son is short, with about five frost free months; even the few crops
134 that can be grown are often injured by autumn frosts. Dark colored chestnut earth is common only on the higher parts of the loess plateau of Shensi and Kansu provinces. It also occurs in the high plateau region of Chinghai Province. In the loess region most of the well-developed dark chestnut earth has been buried under recent loess and alluvial deposits. (T. H. Shen. Agriculture Resources of China, p. 20.)

2. Agriculture

241 Important irrigation systems, made possible by the Yellow
312 River and its tributaries, have been developed in Kansu, Ninghsia, and Shensi. All these irrigated areas except Shensi produce one crop a year, such as wheat, millet, peas, or flax because the growing season is short. The large irrigated plains in Shensi along the Wei River, a tributary of the Yellow River, produce good American upland cotton in addition to wheat, corn, and millet. The largest irrigated area is in the Ninghsia plain where there are twenty-five canals from the Yellow River maintained by the provincial industrial bureau. Irrigation is only possible in the valleys, but they are narrow and comprise but a small percentage of the total cultivated area. When Buck made his survey of this area in 1929-1933, he estimated that thirteen per cent of the total cultivated land was irrigated. He felt that the extent of irrigation sometimes depended upon the prices of agricultural
[651] products fell. Because taxes were still imposed on irrigated land and some of these taxes had even increased, further construction of irrigation works was abandoned until prices commenced to rise again.

137 The vegetation of this region is distinguished by the xerophytic plants, bunch grasses on the high elevation, and the tall and short grass sod. In Chinghai province, the Tsaidam Basin is characterized by desert and weeds, while in the same province, in the vicinity of Kokonor, there is grass. In Kansu, along the foothills and in the mountains, grass and weeds exist while in the desert area of Ninghsia, only weeds grow. Grass grows in Shensi along the Chin-ling and Huang-lung mountain ranges.

241 There is an inadequate amount of green manure crops used in this region, which has resulted in a shortage of organic matter and a deficiency in plant nutrients, especially nitrogen. In most of the
[312] area, straw of rice, wheat, rape, and legumes are not ploughed under but are used for fuel, decreasing an important source of organic matter to the soil and removing minerals necessary for plant growth and crop production. Application of chemical fertilizer in addition to local manures and the plowing under of plant residue is very necessary to soil fertility.

2: Teichman G-5 (1919) 1921 AF13 Northwest China AF13

victorious army all the way from Shensi to Turkestan, their method of dealing with the rebellion being to massacre the inhabitants and reduce to heaps of ruins every Mahomedan habitation they came across. As the male Mahomedans were mostly scouring the country in marauding bands, they met with little difficulty in doing so. Chinese rebellions have in the past of course always been suppressed in this manner, and indeed could probably not have been suppressed otherwise. Fifteen li from Huining the valley contracts into a gorge, and the road runs down the bed of the stream, a brackish trickle of water, for the rest of the way. Huining is a poor city lying in a region of arid valleys. Complaining of the hardships of life at his post, the magistrate informed us that in many parts of his district ordinary fuel was unobtainable, and the inhabitants were reduced to burning dried dung as in the deserts of Tibet and Mongolia. This arid region stretches away apparently to the north till it merges into the Ordos desert, a land of sand and camels. In addition to being such a miserably poor district, his post had the disadvantage of lying on this great road, and when an important personage, such as a Mongol prince or high Chinese functionary, passed by on his way to or from Turkestan, his passage would leave the unfortunate magistrate many hundreds of taels out of pocket, which he could ill afford. We were a very small party when travelling in Kansu and I hope we did not cost him anything; but I know that when we commenced our journeys in Shensi with a huge party we were a heavy burden on the people and officials of the districts through which we passed.

The next stage is a short one of 60 li to the walled posting stage of Hsikung Yi. The road runs down the Huining valley for 20 li, and then ascends a side ravine to the south-west for the rest of the way. The hamlets passed seemed more miserable and the country more desiccated than ever. All along this road, as on most of the bigger roads of Kansu, may be noticed groups of curious little towers every five to ten li. It was a long time before we could get a satisfactory explanation of what these towers were intended for; so far as I know they are only to be seen on the roads of Kansu. We now learned that they were beacon towers, another relic of the rebellion and its suppression, by means of which

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927
AF13 Northwest China AF13

with material or cooking utensils. The suspicious atmosphere created was always most irksome to us, feeling as we did that our cleanliness much exceeded the demands made by these self-righteous Pharisees.

The *kang* on which we slept was of a different construction from those we had met with elsewhere, this being due to the fact that the only fuel obtainable on this journey is animal droppings. These *kangs* were covered with movable boards, under which a hollow space is left for piling up the dry horse-dung, which, once set alight, will smoulder for hours. The fumes are laden with a nauseating smell, which so permeates the traveller's bedding and clothing as to be noticeable for weeks. These same fumes produce an extraordinary effect on the woodwork of the room, which rapidly gains a surface equal in colour and polish to the best old oak. The clothes of the people had now changed from indigo-dyed cotton to undyed sheep's wool. In every hamlet the older men sat in the sun spinning yarn, or knitting socks for themselves on two needles; this is accomplished by means of a diagonal down the centre of the foot and a seam at the back. The better-dressed boys wore garments of white felt. No seam was necessary in the whole coat, as it was shaped in the making to the size and form of the wearer. The felt is home-made, and many times we saw men treading out the macerated wool which is moulded to the shape required and dried in the sun. Shoes, coats and hats are made in this way, and whole villages are given up to the industry.

Lanchow, the capital of Kansu, is reached through a maze of narrow gullies. It is beautifully situated on the swift-flowing Yellow River, and is backed by the Blue Lotus Hills. Its streets are wide and crowded, and its population cosmopolitan. A splendid iron